

## Today's News - Friday, October 9, 2009

- It's a he-says-he-says in an alphabet-soup of now-rivals over Heron Tower.
- Kamin talks to Calatrava: don't be too quick to stick an R.I.P. sign on his Chicago Spire; re: his Ground Zero transit hub: "these horizontal buildings are enormously complex."
- CBE not ready to give a thumbs-up to Birmingham library plans; fears there will be budgetary shortcuts that could skimp on materials.
- Dubai and Abu Dhabi: towering achievements, but not much Arab influence (some architects blame it on the clients).
- Aga Khan Trust for Culture works to preserve Afghanistan's heritage for those who live among it: "This is more radical than it sounds" in "a low-trust society where no one gives - or expects - something for nothing."
- A solar village begins to bloom on National Mall + an amusing take on what student teams are up against.
- EPA 2009 Lifecycle Building Challenge 3 winners announced.
- Building's Sustainability Awards 2009 shortlist announced.
- An eyeful of the shortlisted designs for Abbey Green in Barking, each with a "very different approach to the space."
- In South Africa, three "vastly different, but creative and innovative designs" make the cut for the Border Kei Institute of Architects regional award.
- Q&A with Ken Smith re: the crucial role of inter-disciplinary design teams in making green infrastructure projects work, and the future of sustainable design.
- A lively video of a summer student workshop assigned to redesign Madrid's AZCA District.
- Vergara turns his artful eye on the "forbidding, prisonlike architecture of ghetto day care centers" (depressing but entrancing).
- Weekend diversions:
- Rotterdam's architecture biennial is (mostly) an "indigestible exposition" that "combines a vast volume of information with curatorial vagueness."
- Dyckhoff cheers Chipperfield (celebrated with a show at the Design Museum): "let me introduce you to the biggest British architectural export of his generation, the starchitect nobody's heard of."
- Saffron cheers "Fertile Ground," a "free-for-all showcase" of some emerging Philadelphia firms: "Is this the appearance of a new Philadelphia School?"
- Groves grooves on FLW's sketch of Cottage Studio for Ayn Rand: that it "was never realized might not be a bad thing."
- Page turners: Krier's "The Architecture of Community": he may take his argument to troubling extremes, but "his point about the structure and sustainability of cities is unassailable."
- Kaplan wrestles with "Wrestling Moses": "Who knew then that the machinations debated...would forever change the way cities would be shaped and misshaped."
- "My Kind of Transit: Rethinking Public Transportation in America" is "far from a boring treatise on the need for public transit."
- "Visual Acoustics: The Modernism of Julius Shulman" is "a precious and intimate entry into the life, work, and philosophy" of the great photographer.

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Fresh twist takes Heron tower rivalry to new heights: KPF and PLP each declare victory as client Gerald Ronson says he will retain both practices...struggle for what will soon be the City's tallest tower ended with each side declaring victory... -- Kohn Pedersen Fox; PLP Architecture- BD/Building Design (UK)

Spire awaits the next twist; reports of tower's death premature: When Santiago Calatrava was in town last week...I figured he was ready to stick an R.I.P. sign on his plan for the Chicago Spire...Wrong. Calatrava counseled patience...we discussed the troubles besetting his ground zero transit hub..."these horizontal buildings are enormously complex"... By Blair Kamin- Chicago Tribune

Government watchdog can't trust city council on world class £193 million Library of Birmingham: CBE criticised the planning application for lacking detail...could not offer its support...unless more work was done...too many holes in the planning application which would allow a cash-strapped council or construction firm to take short cuts and skimp on materials. -- Mecanoo- Birmingham Post (UK)

Architecture strives for Arab influence: Looking at Dubai's modern skyscrapers...one might wonder, is this an Arab city? One would ask the same question after a walk around downtown Abu Dhabi...architects might have overlooked the very aspect of the cities' own identity...Some architects blame it on the clients. -- DSA Architects; Dubarch; Anna Klingmann; Arup- Gulf News (UAE)

Restoring Afghanistan: ...the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC)...is working to preserve Afghanistan's heritage for those who live among it...houses are simply returned to their owners, with the stipulation that they take care of them. This is more radical than it sounds, for Afghanistan is a low-trust society where no one gives — or expects — something for nothing.- Wall Street Journal

Solar village begins to bloom on National Mall: The teams, from colleges in the U.S., Canada, Puerto Rico, and Europe, are competitors in the Solar Decathlon, a Department of Energy-sponsored contest designed to showcase the potential of solar energy in buildings. [images, links]- CNET

The Quest to Build an 'Ethically Responsible' House: ...it's hard to ignore the "big, black monolith" looming next door...serves as a constant reminder of what it will take to win this year's Solar Decathlon, a contest sponsored here by the U.S. Department of Energy.- New York Times

EPA 2009 Lifecycle Building Challenge 3 Winners Announced -- William McDonough + Partners; ENVY Modular Wall Systems; Reclaimed Space; etc. [images, links]- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Sustainability Awards 2009 shortlist announced -- Aedas Architects; Bennetts Associates; Cundall; Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios; Jestico + Whiles; pha Consult; PRP; Ramboll; etc.- Building (UK)

Abbey Green design competition: Why Barking is special: ...practices which appear in the shortlist have very different approaches to the space... -- Darling Associates; McDowell + Benedetti; Hawkins\Brown; Tonkin Liu; Lynch Architects; Leit-Werk [links to images]- The Architects' Journal (UK)

Art enters through architecture: Three vastly different, but creative and innovative designs have made the cut for this year's Border Kei Institute of Architects (BKIA) regional award..."our greatest need: useful and meaningful buildings with minimum means." -- Smale & Partners; TCN Architects [images]- Daily Dispatch (South Africa)

Q&A with Ken Smith, ASLA, on His Award-winning Orange County Great Park and MoMA Roof Projects...discusses the value of green infrastructure, the crucial role of inter-disciplinary design teams in making green infrastructure projects work, and the future of sustainable design.- The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

"Urban Endurance & Hybrid Spaces: Rethinking the AZCA District": Students from 9 different countries redesigned Madrid's AZCA District in a workshop led by IE School of Architecture and the Architectural Association School of London. [video]- AA/IE Summer School

[Iron Bars and Razor Wire: The forbidding, prisonlike architecture of ghetto day care centers. By Camilo Jose Vergara \[slide show\]- Slate](#)

[Rotterdam's indigestible exposition: 4th International Architecture Biennale combines a vast volume of information with curatorial vagueness...Taking the vague theme of Open City as its expansive umbrella title, the series of exhibitions is organised under the fuzzy, rather meaningless, headings...a contrived taxonomy which seems to have baffled the sub-curators as much as it does the visitors.- BD/Building Design \(UK\)](#)

[David Chipperfield: top of the form: British architecture is all Twitter and no lasting messages, says Chipperfield, the subject of a Design Museum show "David Chipperfield - Form Matters"...let me introduce you to the biggest British architectural export of his generation, the starchitect nobody's heard of. By Tom Dyckhoff- The Times \(UK\)](#)

[Phila. architects offer some homegrown ideas: An exhibit optimistically titled "Fertile Ground" at the Ice Box gallery...is a free-for-all showcase featuring a dozen emerging firms...A show like this inevitably makes you want to ask: Is this the appearance of a new Philadelphia School? By Inga Saffron -- Erdy McHenry Architecture; Onion Flats; Interface Studio Architects; Moto Design Shop; DIGSAU; Normal Architecture Office \[images\]- Philadelphia Inquirer](#)

[Frank Lloyd Wright sketch: Among the works at Edward Cella Art + Architecture is a drawing of a concept home for Ayn Rand, who struck up a longtime correspondence with the modernist architect...That "Cottage Studio for Ayn Rand" was never realized might not be a bad thing. By Martha Groves \[image\]- Los Angeles Times](#)

[Book review: Modern Problems: "The Architecture of Community" by Léon Krier...advocates a return to more conscientious urban development: ...contends that modernism...has managed to sterilize cities aesthetically...and lead planners and developers to compose cities in unsustainable ways...problem is that he takes his argument to extremes...his point about the structure and sustainability of cities is unassailable.- Baltimore City Paper](#)

[Book review: Jane Jacobs - Gone Three Years - Lives On! "Wrestling Moses: How Jane Jacobs Took On New York's Master Builder and Transformed the American City" by Anthony Flint...Who knew then that the machinations debated...would forever change the way cities would be shaped and misshaped. By Sam Hall Kaplan- The Planning Report](#)

[Book review: "My Kind of Transit: Rethinking Public Transportation in America" by Darrin Nordahl: Far from a boring treatise on the need for public transit...an appeal on behalf of the emotional factors that make most transit repulsive and a select few forms enjoyable and uplifting.- PLANetizen](#)

[Shulman's Joy: "Visual Acoustics: The Modernism of Julius Shulman": ...gives a precious and intimate entry into the life, work, and philosophy of one of the greatest photographers of modern architecture...- The Architect's Newspaper](#)

[WORDS THAT BUILD Tip #19: Choose words and phrases that depict your architecture as a mysterious promise, as well as a known product. By Norman Weinstein- ArchNewsNow](#)



[Atelier Bow-Wow: Four Boxes Gallery, Krabbesholm College, Skive, Denmark](#)

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